SPECIFICATION

Please amend the final paragraph of page 13, line 24 as follows::

An advantage of a preferred de-icing system or method in accordance with the present invention is that it does not need a switch or "control" box to turn the heating "on" or "off". When ice grows on the power line or other surface being protected, the AEF between the conductor and the ice increases, reaching an electric breakdown and plasma-formation level. This is because ice is a better conductor than air. When ice is present, the electric field strength in the gas-filled layer is higher than in the absence of ice. After the ice melts, the field strength within the gas-filled layer decreases, virtually stopping electric breakdown and discharge, with a corresponding reduction in energy consumption. The pressure of the gas in the gas-filled layer can be adjusted to such a level that electric breakdown starts only when the ice thickness reaches a certain value, such as 0.5 cm or 2 cm or any other desired dimension.